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FABC NEWSLETTER

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IN THE CONFERENCES:

Appointed: Bishop Francis Xavier Vira Arpondratana as Archbishop of Bangkok, Thailand; Archbishop Joseph Pamplany, Archbishop of Tellicherry (Syro-Malabar), India, as Archiepiscopal Vicar of Ernakulam-Angamaly (Syro-Malabar), India; Cardinal Pablo Virgilio Siongco David, bishop of Kalookan, Philippines to the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith; Cardinal Tarcisio Isao Kikuchi, S.V.D., Archbishop of Tokyo, Japan to the Dicastery for Communication; Cardinal George Jacob Koovakad, head of Apostolic Journeys at the Secretariat of State to the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches; Bishop Anthony Ji Weizhong as Bishop of Lüliang, China; Bishop Joseph Cai Bingrui as Bishop of Fuzhou [Foochow], China; Cardinal George Jacob Koovakad as Prefect of the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue; Father Augustine Thang Zawm Hung as Bishop of Mindat, Myanmar; Bishop Midyphil Bermejo Billones as Archbishop of Jaro, Philippines; Father Peter Chao Yung-Chi as Auxiliary Bishop of Taipei, Taiwan; Bishop Udumala Bala Showreddy as Archbishop of Visakhapatnam, India; Father Fabian Toppo as Bishop of Jalpaiguri, India; Father Bernard Laloo as Auxiliary Bishop of Shillong, India; Father Selvarajan Dasan as Coadjutor Bishop of Neyyattinkara, India; Father Herman Guinto Abcede, R.C.J. as Bishop of Daet, Philippines; Father Bernardus Bofitwos Baru, O.S.A. as Bishop of Timika, Indonesia; Father Paul Prakash Saginala as Bishop of Cuddapah, India; Father Paul Nguyễn Quang Đình as Auxiliary Bishop of Hưng Hóa, Viet Nam. Succeeded: Bishop Peter Le Tan Loi as Bishop of Can Tho, Viet Nam; Bishop John Rodrigues as Archbishop of Bombay, India.

Resigned: Bishop Bosco Puthur, Bishop Emeritus of Saint Thomas the Apostle of Melbourne (Syro-Malabar), Australia, as Apostolic Administrator of Ernakulam-Angamaly (Syro-Malabar), India.

Retired: Bishop Stephanus Tri Buu Thien as Bishop of Can Tho, Viet Nam; Cardinal Oswald Gracias as Archbishop of Bombay, India; Archbishop Jose Romeo Juanito Orquejo Lazo as Archbishop of Jaro, Philippines; Bishop Clement Tirkey as Bishop of Jalpaiguri, India; Archbishop Paul Tschang In-Nam, Apostolic Nuncio, previously Apostolic Nuncio to Bangladesh, Apostolic Nuncio to Thailand, Apostolic Nuncio to Cambodia, Apostolic Delegate to Myanmar, Apostolic Delegate to Laos, Apostolic Nuncio to Myanmar.

Ceased: Monsignor Ramón D. Uriarte as Administrator of Gumaca, Philippines; Father Paul Shin Eun-geun as Apostolic Administrator of Masan, Korea (South); Bishop Jaya Rao Polimera as Apostolic Administrator of Visakhapatnam, India; Father Paul Shin Eun-geun as Apostolic Administrator of Masan, Korea (South).

Died: Bishop Raymond Saw Po Ray (76+), Bishop Emeritus of Mawlamyine, Myanmar; Bishop John Bosco Panya Kritcharoen (75), Bishop Emeritus of Ratchaburi, Thailand; Bishop Joseph Tran Xuan Tieu (79+), Bishop Emeritus of Long Xuyen, Vietnam; Mr. Joseph Prakai Cholahan (78+), FABC Advisor/Consultant.

FABC DATEBOOK:

– 28 April-1 May 2025, the Central Secretariat will hold a Follow up of FABC 50 Document for Rectors of Major Seminaries at the Camillian Center in Lat Krabang, Bangkok.

– 28 – 30 August 2025, FABC Central Secretariat and FABC Office of Consecrated Life (OCL) will hold a Follow up of FABC 50 Bangkok Document for Formators of Religious Congregations at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

– 22-26 September 2025, The Commission for Synodality will hold the Bishops' Seminar for Synodality at Baan Phu Waan Pastoral Center, Sampran, Bangkok, Thailand.

– 27-30 November 2025, FABC Office of Evangelization and the Pontifical Mission Societies will hold "The Great Pilgrimage of Hope" in Penang, Malaysia.

COMMISSION FOR SYNODALITY

At the annual meeting of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) Central Committee held from 12-13 March 2025 at the Camillian Center in Bangkok, a significant step was taken with the establishment of a new Commission for Synodality. This commission aims to foster the ongoing formation of Bishops in the area of synodality, providing avenues for sharing resources between the Conferences within the FABC. Additionally, the commission will work with the FABC Offices in implementing the synodal way and liaise with other Continental Episcopal Organizations. The Central Committee has appointed the FABC Vice President Cardinal Pablo David from the Philippines as the Chairman of this commission. Rev. Fr. Clarence Devadass from Malaysia has been appointed as the Executive Secretary of the Commission. The other commission's members are a distinguished group, including Rev. Fr. William LaRousse, MM from the FABC Central Secretariat, Dr. Christina Kheng from Singapore, Rev. Fr. Vimal Tirimana, CSsR from Sri Lanka, Ms. Estella Padilla from the Philippines, Ms. Momoko Nishimura, SEMD from Japan, Rev. Fr. Enrico Emmauel Ayo from the Philippines, and Sr. Lalitha Thomas SJT from India. Each member contributes a vast array of experience, having actively participated in both sessions of the Synod on Synodality.

RENEWAL OF OFFICE BEARERS

The Central Committee approved the term renewal of the first terms of three Bishop Chairmen: Archbishop Lawrence Subrato Howlander, Arcbishop of Chattogram, Bangladesh, Office of Consecrated Life (OCL), Bp. Allwyn D'Silva, Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of Bombay, India, Office of Human Development and Climate Change Desk (OHD/CCD), and Archbishop Udumala Bala, Archbishop of Visakhapatnam, India, Office of Clergy (OC). In addition to the three Bishop Chairmen, the Central Committee also approved the renewal of terms for the following officeholders: Bp. Paul Daisuke Narui, Bishop of Niigata, Japan and Msgr. Kike Figaredo Alvargonzales, Prefect Apostolic of Battambang, Cambodia (Bishop Members of OHD/CCD), Bp. Bernard Taiji Katsuya, Bishop of Sapporo, Japan and Bp. Gerardo Alimnaza, Bishop of San Carlos, Philippines (Bishop Members of OC), Archbishop Johanes Harun Yuwono, Archbishop of Palembang, Indonesia (Bishop Member of Office of Evangelization [OE]), Bp. Job Koo Yobi Ist. del Prado, Auxiliary Bishop of Seoul, Korea, Bp. Leo Magdugo Dalmao, Prelate of Isabela de Basilan, Philippines and Bp. Joseph Arumachadath, Bishop of Bhadravathi (Syro-Malabar), India (Bishop Members of OCL), Archbishop Thomas D'Souza, Archbishop of Calcutta, India (Bishop Member of Office of Social Communication [OSC]), Archbishop Midyphil Billones, Archbishop of Jaro, Philippines (Bishop Member of Office of Theological Concerns [OTC]), and Fr. Singareddy Inna Reddy (Executive Secretary of OC).

NEW OFFICE BEARERS

The Central Committee approved Archbishop Simon Poh, Archbishop of Kuching Malaysia as the Bishop Chairman of Office of Evangelization (OE) beginning 1 January 2026. Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo, Bishop of Kidapawan, Philippines was approved as a Bishop Member of the Office of Human Development and Climate Change Desk (OHD/CCD) and Bishop Paul Trairong Multree, Bishop of Surat Thani, Thailand was approved as Bishop Member of the Office of Evangelization (OE) both beginning 1 January 2025. Bishop Peter Paul Saldanha, Bishop of Mangalore, India was

approved as a Bishop Member of the Office of Theological Concerns (OTC) beginning 1 January 2026. Bishop Joseph SON Sam-seok, Bishop of Busan, Korea was approved as a Bishop Member and Dr. Steven Selvaraju of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia was approved as the Executive Secretary from a terna as recommended by the Bishop Chairman, Bishop Antonius Subianto Bunjamin, OSC for the Office of Education and Faith Formation (OEFF). Both begin on 1 January 2026.

OEIA AND OSC

The Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs (OEIA) and Office of Social Communications (OSC), due to the special situation they found themselves in, had Acting Bishop Chairmen appointed by the FABC Leadership. The Central Committee approved of Archbishop Felix Machado, Bishop Emeritus of Vasia, India as the full Bishop Chairman of OEIA for one term only beginning on 1 January 2025 and they approved Bishop Marcelino Antonio M. Maralit Jr., Bishop of San Pablo, Philippines as the full Bishop Chairman of OSC beginning his first term on 1 January 2025. Fr. Robin Seelan, SJ was approved as the Executive Secretary of OEIA with his first term beginning 1 January 2025. Bishop Christophorus Tri Harsono, Bishop of Purwokerto, Indonesia was approved as a Bishop Member of OEIA beginning his first term on 1 January 2025. Fr. John Mi Shen was approved as Executive Secretary of OSC with his first term beginning on 1 January 2025.

ASSOCIATE SECRETARIES

The Central Committee appointed two Associate Secretaries to the FABC Central Secretariat. Fr. Clarence Devadass, a priest of the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur and Fr. Enrico Emmanuel Ayo, a priest of the Archdiocese of Manila were appointed with their first term beginning on 14 March 2025. They will add research and administration/communication dimensions to the Central Secretariat.